



Sexually Transmitted Disease

The result of reducing staff or funding of this activity would negatively impact the number of patients examined and treated in STD clinics in Louisiana. Reduction in staff decreases access to care for the uninsured and underinsured populations. This could result in higher rates of sexually transmitted disease (STDs) including gonorrhea, Chlamydia, syphilis and HIV by keeping people out of care until complications develop and continuing the spread of disease. The potential for costly inappropriate use of Emergency Departments (ED) increases when people feel they can't access care anywhere else. If funding was increased, more patients could be examined and treated in STD clinics.

Objective

To prevent death, disability, and social loss by interrupting and preventing the spread of STDs through the identification of potentially infectious patients and their referral to treatment.

Performance Indicators

1. **Timely Treatment of Women with Chlamydia at STD Clinics:** Among clients of STD clinics, the proportion of women with positive CT tests who are treated within 14 and 30 days of the date of specimen collection.
2. **Timely Treatment of Women with Gonorrhea at STD Clinics:** Among clients of STD clinics, the proportion of women with positive CT tests who are treated within 14 and 30 days of the date of specimen collection.

Narrative

The DHH Office of Public Health provides STD clinical services as a safety net provider for uninsured, Medicaid, and other vulnerable patients with or exposed to sexually transmitted diseases. STD clinics ensure timely access to care, including provision of prescription drugs regardless of the patient's ability to pay for services. STD clinic goals are:

1. Cure and/or treat sexually transmitted infections.
2. Prevent complications and sequelae of sexually transmitted infections, including complications related to pregnancy or family planning.

3. Prevent transmission of sexually transmitted infections to others.
4. Reduce HIV transmission.
5. Provide counseling on future risk reduction.
6. Provide counseling as needed on coping with chronic sexually transmitted infections to others.
7. Provide outreach for care and management to exposed sex partners.
8. Test all clients presenting for STD service for Syphilis and HIV unless they opt out.

STD Clinics maintain high standards of patient confidentiality in order to protect the rights and privacy of people who receive services. The STD Control Program establishes standards and maintains policies and procedures for STD clinical services provided statewide, regionally, and locally in the Office of Public Health parish health units, STD clinics, and community based organizations, where the STD medical services provided are funded by OPH. The Louisiana STD Control Program standards utilize the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) treatment guidelines as a basis for STD diagnosis, treatment and case management.

Better Health

STD clinics provide over 60,000 visits in parish health units and two stand-alone STD clinics annually statewide. Over 70% of patients are African-American, 25% are White and the remaining 5% include Asian/Pacific Islanders and Native Americans. Fifty-five percent (55%) of STD clinic patients are less than 25 years old.

Youth Education

- A CDC study showed that overall, one in four girls in the United States had a sexually transmitted disease. Teens in the study were tested for four infections: chlamydia, trichomoniasis, herpes simplex and the human papillomavirus.
- Students perform better when they show up for class, healthy and ready to learn. STD treatment is needed by a significant portion of Louisiana's youth.

Safe and Thriving Children and Families

- Poverty among Louisiana's citizens has hampered the ability of citizens to receive appropriate treatment for sexually transmitted diseases in a timely manner. Delayed treatment leads to unnecessary spread of disease and complications including infertility. Over 50% of patients seen in STD clinics are less than 25 years old.

Hurricane Protection & Emergency Preparedness

- During an emergency STD clinic staff serve as first responders (individuals involved in an emergency management role) to execute Emergency Support Function 8 tasks.

The prevention and control of STDs are based on the following five major strategies: 1) education and counseling of persons at risk on ways to avoid STDs through changes in sexual behaviors; 2) identification of asymptomatically infected persons and of symptomatic persons unlikely to seek diagnostic and treatment services; 3) effective diagnosis and treatment of infected persons; 4) evaluation, treatment, and counseling of sex partners of persons who are infected with an STD; and 5) preexposure vaccination of persons at risk for vaccine-preventable STD.

Legal Authority: Partner services are supported by RS 40:1062 – Infection of other prohibited, RS 40:1063 – Examination of persons suspected of being infected, and Louisiana Administrative Code Title 51 – Public Health – Sanitary Code Part II The Control of Diseases Chapter 1 paragraph 115 Investigations.

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